



## **State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) for Tennessee's Early Intervention System (TEIS) Meeting Minutes**

Oct. 23, 2012  
9 a.m. – 12 p.m. (central time)

### **SICC Members in Attendance:**

Bobbi Lussier-Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE)  
Ned Solomon-Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Robyn Ridgley-Middle Tennessee State University  
Gladys Harris-Family Partners  
Jacqueline Johnson-Tennessee Department of Health (TDOH)  
Louise Barnes-Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse  
Janet Coscarelli-Tennessee Head Start Collaboration Office  
Kiersten Kinder, Susan Gray School

### **SICC Guests in Attendance:**

Tonya Bowman-Family Voices of Tennessee  
Linda Hartbarger-Department of Education  
Susie McCamy-University of Tennessee Center on Deafness  
Belinda Hotchkiss-Family Voices of Tennessee  
Carmen V. Santiago-Family Voices of Tennessee  
Deborah Usry-Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (TNAAP)  
Heather Higgins-First Steps  
Catherine Goodwin-Department of Education  
Julie Beeler-University of Tennessee Center on Deafness  
Danielle Keeton-LeBonheur Early Intervention and Development (LEAD)  
Jacque Cundall-Tennessee Department of Health (TDH)  
Sarah Hunt-Child Development Centers (CDC)  
Donna McConnico-Signal Centers  
Luz Belleza-Binns-Metro Social Services Division

### **MEETING:**

#### **Opening/Welcome**

SICC Chair Gladys Harris opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees. The SICC members, lead agency staff, and guests introduced themselves and identified their respective agencies and roles.

#### **Approval of Agenda**

Gladys Harris reviewed the agenda and asked for any additions.



### **Approval of Minutes of April and July Meeting**

Minutes from the April and July SICC meetings were reviewed and a request for corrections was made by Gary Smith who is with the Department of Human Services (DHS) not the Department of Children's Services (DCS) as noted previously in the July SICC Minutes. Minutes were approved.

### **Chair and Co-Chair Nominations**

Ned Solomon and Robyn Ridgley were nominated for Chair and Co-Chair, respectively.

### **Agency and Program Reporting**

Division Update: Bobbi Lussier

Bobbi reported that reorganization had taken place with Special Populations being split into two divisions and that she has stepped down as Assistant Commissioner for Special Populations to devote her time and attention to serving as the executive director of the department's Early Childhood Division, which consists of pre-K and Tennessee Early Intervention System (TEIS).

Point of Entry (POE) District Office Updates: TEIS District Administrators

Linda Hartbarger welcomed District Administrators (DAs) from the nine TEIS offices that were in attendance today and thanked them for their dedication and hard work for serving children and families of TEIS while providing public awareness and child find.

She also shared that the Central Reimbursement Office (CRO) had two new members, Towanda Fisher and Eyerusalem Woldie to aid in the billing department.

Two new members added in the role of Data Manager had been selected, Jennifer Morel for the South Central office and Gary Suits for the Southeast office.

Three new members in the role of District Administrator have also been added, Beverly Bell for the Memphis Delta office, Rene Bard for the North West office and Barbara Thomas for the South East office.

Three new Service Coordinators for two TEIS offices have been added, Anna Bolin for Upper Cumberland, and Eric Stanberry and Shawanni Jones for Greater Nashville.

There is a new hiring process that was implemented Oct.1 bringing about needed changes. There are future plans of filling four more Service Coordinator positions.

Linda announced to the group the retirement of Anita Milbrath, Data Manager for the TEIS North West Martin office who will be greatly missed.



Regina Bowman, District Administrator (DA) with First Tennessee TEIS office has a staff of 13; her office has been supporting the East Tennessee office in service coordination by picking up Hamblen and Cocke County on a permanent basis.

Patricia Cooper, DA for the East Tennessee TEIS office has a staff of 16 which has just added McMinn County. She reported they have 647 kids with active Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs). They are partnering with Children's Hospital and the Department of Children's Services (DCS) to do trainings that involve their Service Coordinators.

Barbara Thomas, DA for the South East TEIS office has a staff of four Service Coordinators, one Developmental Specialist and a Data Manager that serve 10 counties working with three Early Intervention Resource Agencies (EIRA).

Ruthe Threet, DA for the South Central TEIS office has a staff of 15 service coordinators serving 15 counties. They average 35 referrals weekly which amount to about 1800 for the year. The office has 752 active cases.

Melinda Dellert, DA for the Greater Nashville TEIS office has a staff of 15 that serves four counties with 623 referrals and 668 active children. As part of its public awareness project, her office is partnering with the Martha O'Brien Center providing support for teen moms and their babies.

Georgia Garrett, DA for the Upper Cumberland TEIS office has a staff of 14 including eight Service Coordinators who average 54 to 65 children on their caseloads. They serve 420 children per month. Children and homelessness are a part of their public awareness campaign.

Rene Bard, DA for the North West TEIS office has a staff of 11 serving 13 counties that covers roughly 6,000 square miles. Within the office, their combined experience comes to 150 years and nine months. Rene's office is part of a Pilot Initiative Project that conducts Battelle Diagnostic Instrument 2 (BDI-2) evaluations on children upon exit from TEIS. They are also taking a look at Early Childhood Outcome (ECO) data upon entrance and exit; they also will work with the Local Education Agency (LEA) to make them a part of the information. Linda said that she hopes to share that data at the upcoming January SICC meeting which will show how children are progressing, measuring upon entrance and then again at exit. This will show their alignment and transition into kindergarten.

Joan Kennedy, DA for the South West TEIS office has a staff of eight including four Service Coordinators. They have 300 active cases and their office works with the Jackson-Madison County Hospital sponsoring a baby fest for families and children. With more than 1500 families in attendance this past year, it provides vital information on TEIS services offered, games, and promotional items for the family as a whole.

Beverly Bell, DA for the Memphis Delta TEIS office has a staff of 20 which serves four counties, they currently have 808 cases, and 651 of those being active. There will be a meeting on October 25 with the Deaf Coalition that Beverly regularly attends as part of the public awareness project.

### **Annual Performance Report (APR) Update: Catherine Goodwin**

Catherine Goodwin shared that the Office of Special Education Program (OSEP) focus is on results, beginning with *ECO Data*, which is indicator three and *Child Find*, which are indicators five and six, *Awareness and Family Survey* are also being looked at. Catherine will be meeting in January with Gladys Harris for work on the APR with suggestions and a review for submission to OSEP in February 2013. Tennessee once again had the determination of "Meets Requirements" for the third year in a row as a direct result of Catherine's work which is the best recognition a state can receive stated Bobbi Lussier.



### **Newborn Hearing/Early Hearing & Detection Intervention (EHDI) Update: Julie Beeler/Jacque Cundall**

Jacque brought a hand-out to show the number of children served by the Agency and that there is a pilot program of Tele-Audiology upcoming in November. Partnering with Vanderbilt, audiologists will be on the other end of the phone to directly administer and interpret results; this new technology will mean a reduction in travel time for families. The average age of babies at the time of referral is 1.8 months. There will also be a new program, *Guide by Your Side*, which will provide training for deaf mentors. Julie shared that screeners will be in Early Head Start programs in 2013 used to assess children.

### **Information Gathering/Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC): Tawny Spinelli**

The Council is provided through a grant under the umbrella of the Tennessee Governor's Children's Cabinet which is co-chaired by the Governor and First Lady (only one in the country). Under that grant there are four goals:

**Goal 1:** to align and enhance existing statewide early childhood system of care and education for children, ages birth to five years, which promotes school readiness.

**Goal 2:** Through a two-step process, conduct a statewide needs assessment that identifies the availability and defines indicators of quality of early childhood education opportunities delivered by various state programs for children, ages birth to five years, and how providers of those related state services interact with each other at the local level to assure efficiency and effectiveness of state efforts.

**Goal 3:** Enhance collaboration and coordination across state departments specifically in the areas of (1) training for early childhood educators and providers and (2) parent engagement, training and empowerment.

**Goal 4:** Develop recommendations regarding the sharing of appropriate child data across state departments and regarding establishment of a unified data collection system.

At the SICC meeting, index cards were given out with one of the questions being asked "how each of the agencies works together at the community level to raise awareness?" Some answers from the audience included training, cross-referrals, round table discussions, Individual Education Plan (IEP), and shared awareness activities. The other question posed was what one positive or negative characteristic affects children being served?

### **SICC Business**

SICC Representative Update:

Gladys said that nominations for a parent representative for the SICC are still needed. Appointed candidates can either participate in person or by phone and reimbursement for mileage is included. A Legislative representative is still needed as well. Nominations can be addressed to either Gladys Harris or Lise Earwood.

Recent SICC appointments by the Governor's office, Catherine Knowles and Janet Coscarelli, were officially welcomed as members.



### **Member Agency/Program Updates**

Janet Coscarelli reported on the number of children served in Head Start that being about 17,635, of which 2,073 had active IEPs, 614 had previous IEPs and Head Start had 1,459 incoming with a diagnosis. While there were 1,973 in TEIS, Head Start found another 42 percent. The migrant children population continues to be a problem across the state.

Jacqueline Johnson with TDOH said that their program offers nutritional counseling for obese children, doctor visit payments, paid Vanderbilt Weight Loss Clinic and paid family memberships to the YMCA. A pilot program was implemented to target children age ten (10) through 21 years of age with brochures distributed to educate children and their parents regarding childhood obesity.

Janet Coscarelli asked the question if Children Special Services (CSS) care coordinators are already a part of some agencies?

A CSS care coordinator is already part of some TEIS staff meetings to address the obesity topic and ways to decrease the number of children affected. Gary Smith also says his agency works with CSS.

Susie McCamy stated that former Service Coordinator Sarah Rowland and parent of two special needs children, held a workshop for parents and families of special needs children which was highly successful. Sarah is planning to hold another workshop next year in the East Tennessee area.

Rebecca Gossett representing The Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics for Deborah Usry said that they have upcoming trainings.

### **Public Input**

None was given.

### **Topic requests for next meeting**

APR Status Update  
Election of new members

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12 p.m.

### **Next SICC Meeting**

Tuesday, Jan. 22, 2013

